

SafeSupervisor

YOUR FRONT-LINE MANAGER SAFETY RESOURCE SINCE 1929

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Safety Attitude How to Get Workers to Develop One

Getting workers throughout your company to display a "safety attitude" is the key to a safe and healthy work environment. Of course, that's easy to say. The hard part is to actually cultivate such a safety attitude among your workforce. Here's what safety trainers can do to achieve this objective.

The Challenge of Gaining Buy In

The biggest challenge is establishing and maintaining a safety conscious work environment. That's a tall order and a full-time job. Sure, you might think and eat safety every day; but that's not enough to get other people in the company to do the same.

By definition, a safety culture has to be experienced company-wide. The commitment must exist at all levels, including workers, supervisors and managers. Of course, buy-in at the upper levels is of critical importance. After all, if the rest of the management team's agenda conflicts with this goal — such as an agenda that stresses maximizing production and output without regard for employees' safety and welfare — then there's no way the culture will be created.

The Role of Upper Management

You must have full support and buy-in from the top of the organization where the marching orders are initiated. Your task is to harness upper management's muscle behind your culture building efforts. That involves working with your safety director to secure management's help to:

- Promote safety to the Big 3: Safety must be recognized and included with the same importance as the "big three" – Quality, Delivery and Productivity. Safety can't be the odd man out. It can't be taken into consideration only when problems arise, or else problems will arise.
- Make safety everyone's job: Every job description in the organization should include safety-related responsibilities and every employee should be held accountable for

fulfilling these responsibilities.

- Establish safety goals: Quarterly and annual goals are set for the "big 3." The same should apply for safety metrics. Establish the goals, monitor them, display them and celebrate accomplishments along the way. Accordingly, the company's success should be measured in part on the achievement of safety goals and the responsibility must be everyone's in order to achieve the goals for that success.
- Make safety a corporate mission: That corporate mission statement that you see hanging in a company's reception area and board room generally includes a nice statement about satisfying the customer by providing a quality product. That's all well and good. But if there isn't also a reference to the company's commitment to maintain a safe and healthy work environment, then odds are you're looking at a company that doesn't have a true safety culture.

From Preaching to Practice

Once you have gained the corner office's commitment to a safety culture, everything just takes care of itself and health and safety nirvana is achieved. Right? Wrong. Sorry, but this is just the beginning of the challenge. The really tough task lies ahead. That task is to get everyone in the company to follow the directive in that corporate mission statement. Now you must create a work environment where people actually do think and act safely on the job. And a big part of the burden to champion this effort and keep it going falls squarely on the shoulders of you and the company's safety director. Let's look at what you can do to build a company-wide safety attitude.

Start at the very beginning. As soon as a new employee walks in the door and before they can even set foot in the plant, give them a thorough safety orientation. This is the best and earliest opportunity to plant the seed of the "safety attitude." A safety orientation establishes the importance of safety to the company by laying it

... continued from cover

out as a responsibility that goes along with being a good employee.

Share the Responsibilities

Good safety managers utilize their best resources, including:

- **Managers & Supervisors.** Managers and supervisors work with the employees on the front line every day and therefore can have the most consistent impact by:
 - Setting an example;
 - Carrying out the established safety guidelines and policies throughout the company; and
 - Providing feedback for prevention and solutions to safety-related issues and problems.
- **Workers.** Once you have the buy-in and support from managers, the workers on the floor need to be involved. Create a plant-wide safety committee program with representatives from all areas and shifts in the facility, so that everyone has a voice in safety issues.
- **Safety Committee.** How many safety committees just meet, talk and complain? How many more propose ideas, solutions, changes and actions, but have no authority or commitment to follow through and implement any of their proposals? The ineffectiveness of a committee will quickly undermine your progress. And it's much more difficult to win back the support and confidence lost along the way. A good safety committee must be consistent and active and it must produce visible results. Once you have an effective, working safety committee with good representation and support at all levels of management and on the shop floor, then you have a good foundation to support your safety program and a medium for continuous two-way communication.

Lead by Example

Your safety attitude must be contagious. You must be seen not as the enemy trying to impede the process, but as someone dedicated to a safer work environment, fighting for everyone's safety every day.

Your workers need to see and feel the company's commitment to providing a safe and healthy work environment. Seeing improvements or changes made in the name of safety demonstrates management's dedication and goes a long way to getting everyone involved.

Discipline is also an important part of the program. View the individuals in your workplace as a safety team with your role being to constantly recruit players. Those who blatantly undermine the team by continuously ignoring safety and putting others at risk don't belong on the team or in the company. Safety rules must be consistently and firmly enforced to let everyone know that following



established safety policies is just as important as quality, delivery and productivity.

Never Give Up

Having the support and resources of everyone makes a world of difference when you can't be everywhere, 24/7. You need to allocate time and energy to other important EHS-related responsibilities, such as training, operating permits, licenses, inspections, as well as all the regulatory requirements. Hey, someone has to drive the bus and that's you.

You need to keep everyone thinking and acting safely every day. That requires effort. Make yourself accessible, encourage suggestions and show your commitment by implementing changes and improvements that make for a safer work environment.

Conclusion

The safety attitude is the all-important "intangible" that every team or program must have to be successful. You can't touch it, but you can feel it. You can also feel it when it's missing. The absence of a safety attitude is what we fight against every day to avoid the most hated word in the supervisor's vocabulary: "accident."

PICTURE THIS

Zip Tie 1, Fire Extinguisher 0 - Let's Hope Everyone has Superhuman Strength When a Fire Breaks Out

The clasp holding this fire extinguisher broke, so someone decided to secure it with a zip tie. It's nice and secure, so much so that in the event of a fire, this fire extinguisher won't be able to be used without being cut free with a knife.

KEEP IN MIND

The best-case scenario will place extinguishers in highly visible, clearly labelled locations that are sufficiently low to the ground so that even shorter employees can easily reach them. Clear instructions in large print font should be printed and placed right beside the extinguisher sign.

Using a portable fire extinguisher is an important safety skill. You never know when you might have to use it at work, home or on the road.

To extinguish small fires before they become large, extinguishers' contents smother or cool the flames. However, not everyone knows how to use an extinguisher. If a fire broke out in your work area, you need to stop it before it spreads. You wouldn't have time to ask your safety officer to teach you how to use equipment.

Fire extinguishers have received a new letter. The well-known Class A, B, C and D extinguishers have been joined by a Class K extinguisher. This new type was designed to fight fires that involve cooking oil.

The route to the extinguisher must be kept clear at all times. This means you must not place boxes, equipment or other obstructions in the path.

The extinguisher must be maintained and serviced regularly. If it has been used, it must be refilled or replaced so it is ready to use again. Tell your supervisor if you see anything wrong with the extinguisher.

You need training so you will understand when and how to operate a fire extinguisher. You also need hands-on practice to be able to operate a fire extinguisher in an emergency.

Most portable fire extinguishers operate in a similar manner. Use



the word **PASS** to help you remember the steps in working an extinguisher:

P - pull the pin

A - aim at the base of the fire

S - squeeze the handle to release the extinguishing material

S - sweep from side to side until the extinguisher is empty

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Safety Communication Staging a Phoney Death to Prevent a Real One

Talking to your workers about safety isn't always enough to prevent illness and injury. You must also ensure that workers talk to each other when they're on the job. After all, if workers don't look out for their co-workers, who will? Unfortunately, many companies have a hard time impressing their workers that the need to communicate is real. Here's a dramatic and proven technique you can use to shatter complacency and get workers talking to each other.

Staging a Fatality

The technique was recommended by a supervisor at a manufacturing company with a wonderful (and puzzling) record of no recordable injuries for three years. It's a small company of about 75 people. The floor crew has a penchant for hard-headedness and complacency brought about by the long track record of no serious accidents. They didn't have a safety program before the supervisor came, and the unspoken prevailing outlook was: "We didn't need all this before. Why do we need one now?"

The supervisor had a hard time breaking through the self-satisfaction. He knew the law of averages was going to catch up to them sooner or later. He felt like he had to do something before the inevitable serious injury or death occurred.

One day, while he saw an inexperienced employee stacking materials in a dangerous way. A veteran co-worker was right at his side. But he was eating his lunch and didn't offer a word to the rookie. The supervisor thought to himself: "Workers should be talking to each other. This lunacy won't stop until someone gets killed!"

Then he had an idea. If a fatality was needed to wake them up, he would go ahead and stage one. His strategy was to "kill" someone in simulation before the real thing struck.

Setting the Scene

At the next weekly safety meeting, the supervisor selected Joe, one of the workers. He deliberately chose Joe because he's one of the more well-liked and friendly persons. So his "death" would cause genuine sorrow.

The supervisor told Joe to lie down on the break room floor and used a large piece of white chalk to draw one of those infamous police "chalk line" around him. It was fun for the guys. Later, though, the laughter died as the seriousness of the situation began to set in. The supervisor directed Joe to move to the very back of the room, so he was no longer in plain view. Then he spoke exactly as if Joe had just died.

Announcing Joe's Death

He restarted the meeting as if he had just called everyone together, acting as if he was seriously shaken and upset. The supervisor informed the crew that Joe had just fallen 40 feet from a scaffold in the yard. In a slightly shaking voice, he told them that Joe was wearing no fall protection and no hardhat and that none of his co-workers spoke to him about it. He told them the ambulance had just

left the building, but that Joe was not expected to make it.

The supervisor then fast-forwarded the clock and read aloud the detailed "accident report," which he'd pre-written. The accident report ended with "Joe did not die at the scene, but held on for two weeks before succumbing to internal injuries. He never regained consciousness."

The Effects of Joe's 'Death'

Next, the supervisor walked the crew through the steps of what would happen next. He did this in great detail and ensured realism. He talked about Joe's family going bankrupt from medical bills not covered by workers' comp; the foreclosure and subsequent loss of his families' home; the repossession of the family car. This was followed by OSHA investigations, fines, civil suits by Joe's family against the company, the closure of the shop (bankruptcy brought on by the canceling several large contracts and the inability to get others due to our "new" safety record, civil suits and fines, etc. etc.) He touched on two of Joe's workplace friends who began to suffer the effects depression. One friend, unable to cope with his new job, quit and moved away. Another friend began drinking heavily and eventually lost his job due to alcoholism.

His talk went on to a realistic-looking "Obituary" that he had written, detailing the family he had left behind—mother, father, sisters, brothers, wife and young children. He passed copies of these out, as if they were newspaper clippings.

Hitting Home

By this time, half the crowd was simply staring at the chalk outline. The supervisor could tell they were thinking hard. The circumstances were right out of their work environment, and he was making them face it without much need for imagination.

He finished by going around the room and looking people in the eye individually. He told them in a seriously hushed tone that Joe was dead. Now it was up to someone in the company to drive out to Joe's house and inform his expectant wife and his two children.

The supervisor asked several of them individually (I picked the hard-shell guys): "Will you do that for us? Will you tell her for us that we're sorry? Your husband's dead? You could tell her that we know we've always done things we shouldn't, but [here he managed to make my voice crack] today was just a bad day."

When the meeting broke up, everyone was quiet. A week later, the chalk line was still on the break room floor, a silent reminder.

Conclusion

It may not have been a cheery and upbeat safety meeting, but it was unusual. And it really got workers' attention when other methods had failed. Soon thereafter, the supervisor felt the attitudes shift a little and noticed that workers were making a point to communicate with each other. The corner had been turned.

Accident Prevention

What's At Stake

The succinct definition for a workplace accident is an "unplanned event that results in personal injury or property damage." An accident, by definition is something that happens unintentionally.

When a workplace accident happens that requires cleanup and sanitization of the worksite, how should it be handled? If you said, "send in the janitorial staff," you would be wrong for several reasons:

1. Potential bloodborne pathogen exposure.

Blood found at the site of a workplace accident can contain viruses such as hepatitis B and C, HIV, and Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), all of which can infect individuals who come into contact with it.

2. Violation of health and safety laws.

Any employee with a risk of exposure to blood or biological materials has the right to free hepatitis B vaccinations, bloodborne pathogen and PPE training, and personal protective equipment paid for by their employer. Employers who require workers (including janitorial employees) to clean up after a serious workplace accident could be in violation of OSHA's health and safety laws.

3. Inexperienced cleanup.

The blood at the site of a workplace accident can seep into carpet, padding, sub flooring, and walls, and has the potential to infect workers if not properly sanitized. Hiring an experienced bioremediation company will not only ensure that the site is clean, but will also ensure it is sanitized to hospital-grade standards.

What's the Danger?

Whatever variation of the definition you prefer, workplace accidents can be painful and costly for both employers and employees. Here are a few types of accidents most commonly reported in the workplace.

- **Overexertion:** We do it all the time: pull a bookcase, carry heavy equipment or lift awkward boxes. Injuries from overexertion, such as sprains and strains, are the leading workplace accident out there.
- **Falling:** Just like in our opening example, falling presents a significant risk in many work environments. It could be as simple as falling down stairs or tumbling off a roof.
- **Slips and trips:** Have you ever seen the image of someone slipping on a banana peel? It's the same idea (probably minus the banana). Slips and trips can be the culprit behind things like muscle strains and other injuries.
- **Falling objects:** Whether it's a heavy box of files or a piece of machinery at a construction site, falling objects present a particular risk of head injuries to workers.
- **Repetitive motion:** It's a little less obvious, but repetitive motion injuries have an impact on many types of workers, from frequent

computer users who struggle with carpal tunnel syndrome to auto mechanics who develop chronic back pain.

How to Protect Yourself

While there are specific safety requirements for individual industries, which employers need to meet, there are often human errors that fall through the cracks simply because they're overlooked.

Workers and employers rush to complete deadlines and may not pay as close attention as they should. In other cases, there may be hazards that an employer or managers aren't aware of in their workplace. Put safety at the forefront.

Follow this list of concrete tips on how to prevent injuries from happening in the first place.

1. Keep Workspaces Clean No matter if your work environment is a manufacturing warehouse or an office cubicle, keeping the area clean and well-maintained decreases the chance of accidents.

2. Post Proper Signage Employers should post signs reminding employees of proper safety procedures in noticeable places and in spaces where those specific procedures should be practiced.

3. Stay up to Date on Vehicle Maintenance For employers that provide staff with company vehicles to complete daily tasks, it's imperative that cars are well maintained and serviced on a regular basis.

4. Report Dangers and Accidents Most employees know that they should report an actual accident but it's important that employers encourage their staff to bring any foreseeable danger to management's attention.

5. Provide Proper Training All staff need to be properly trained for their position. This includes teaching them how to use equipment and follow safety procedures during their course of work

6. Provide Proper Equipment All staff must also be equipped for their specific job. Equipment may vary from safety harnesses to proper gloves and goggles. Under no circumstances should employees perform functions without the proper equipment.

7. Avoid Shortcuts Many times, accidents happen not because the safety precautions are unknown but because people take short cuts when they're familiar with their job or are in a hurry.

8. What to do when an accident has occurred When an accident first occurs, the number one thing is to report it immediately. Some employees don't think to report an incident if there isn't serious injury.

Final Word

Reporting immediately close calls or near misses paves the way for workplace safety.

Sanitizer Safety

What's At Stake

Hand sanitizer is an important part of a workplace – especially during time of pandemic or infection outbreak. Hand sanitizer does not replace proper handwashing but has been more common as it's ready-to-use and portable when you need to ensure your hands are germ-free. Keep in mind though, that there are risks associated with the use of hand sanitizers – especially ones containing alcohol.

What's the Danger?

There are two main types of hand sanitizers. Those that are alcohol-free, and those containing alcohol.

Alcohol-Free Hand Sanitizer

This type of hand sanitizer is less effective and is infrequently used in workplaces. There is little risk to using these other than the risk of not sanitizing to the level that is needed.

Alcohol-based Hand Sanitizer

Many popular hand sanitizers contain some sort of combination of alcohol – either isopropyl alcohol, ethanol or n-propanol. The higher the alcohol content, the more effective the hand sanitizer. Some versions can contain anywhere from 60% to 95% alcohol. As the percentage of chemicals and alcohol in your sanitizer increases, so does the risk.

How to Protect Yourself

Alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be hazardous in multiple ways. It is flammable, can be explosive and can be dangerous to your skin if overused. Here are some quick tips when using hand-sanitizer in your workplace or at home:

Use Handwashing First: Proper handwashing with soap and water is still the most effective way to reduce the spread of infection so only use hand-sanitizer if this option is not available.

Proper Use: If you are using hand sanitizer, follow these steps to get the best results possible. Just like when washing with soap and water, make sure you cover your hands fully – rubbing the sanitizer in for at least 20 seconds.

Storage and Hazards: Keep hand sanitizer stored in a cool dry place. This is especially important for alcohol-based sanitizers where the risk of hazards increase with the percentage of alcohol. Keep away from open flames and in the event of an incident with hand sanitizer, wear respiratory protection when extinguishing the fire. Follow your company's procedures for storage and use of flammable liquids to minimize the risk. In case of a spill, clean up immediately with water. If storing large amounts of hand sanitizer with alcohol understand the explosion dangers that come with keeping high quantities of a flammable substance in the area.

Do Not Ingest: Hand sanitizers are not intended for human consumption. In fact, alcohol-based hand sanitizer is considered an over-the-counter drug in the US. As such it's important to treat it with

the same respect as any other similar drug. Ingestion – especially in high amounts can prove to be fatal. In the case of hand-sanitizer poisoning, call 911 immediately.

Skin Safety: Excessive use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be a risk as it is known to dry out the skin. There are some sanitizers available that add a component to help decrease the dryness caused by the alcohol. Excessive use can also leave your hands or whatever you have sanitized with a fire risk. There have been cases where people have suffered severe burns after sanitizing their hands then coming in contact with flame.

Final Word

Hand sanitizers are a convenient alternative when handwashing isn't possible. Always use caution when using hand sanitizer and follow recommended application and use. Use it with care or don't use it at all.

Quiz

1. Alcohol-free hand sanitizer is best for protection against germs.
 True
 False
2. Storage of alcohol-based sanitizer includes keeping it in a cool place.
 True
 False
3. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is only flammable if it contains a lot of alcohol.
 True
 False
4. Never ingest hand sanitizer. If ingestion occurs, call 911.
 Yes
 No

What Would You Do?

You have just started back at your job and a new requirement for all employees is to clean their hands before entering each area of the plant. You see there are hand sanitizer dispensers available, but one is always leaking onto the floor. What would you do?

Preparing for Emergencies in the Workplace

What's At Stake

Unexpected emergencies occur in workplaces every day in factories, plants, offices and warehouses, as well as construction sites and on the road. It could be a fire, fatal injury, flood, earthquake, shooting, tornado, chemical spill or another kind of crisis. So it's important that companies have an emergency response plan to cover all expected and unexpected disasters. For this plan to be effective, all employees must be trained in the roles they will play in an emergency.

What's the Danger?

If you've never experienced an emergency in your workplace, you might find it hard to imagine such a thing could happen. However, every day in job settings just like yours, something goes seriously wrong. Whether everyone survives and escapes injury often depends on how well they are prepared for an emergency.

Example:

You're on a construction site when someone shouts a warning. You look around and see a tornado bearing down on your worksite. Do you know where to find shelter? Or a freight train carrying hazardous chemicals derails behind your plant. It splits apart and bursts into flame. How do you raise the alarm?

How to Protect Yourself

Confusion and panic are often the first obstacles when an unplanned event presents a serious risk to life or limb. That's why an organized approach is the essential ingredient of an emergency response plan. Knowing what to do in case of an emergency can prevent panic and it can save lives.

Here are four things you should know:

1. The possible hazards.

You need to know what can go wrong. Are hazardous chemicals stored or transported near your workplace? Is your workplace an essential service or a high-profile setting that could be targeted by terrorists? Are you located in a tornado zone or a natural floodplain?

2. Evacuation procedures.

You must know how to get out of the building and reach safety. Right now, can you point out two exits from your work area? Do you know where you are to assemble with your co-workers after an evacuation of the building? This is an important aspect of the emergency procedure, because if you do not show up there, an emergency crew might have to risk injury looking for you.

3. Your duties.

Do you know what duties you're expected to perform in an emergency, such as shutting down equipment or checking for stragglers before you leave? Do you know how to call for help and who to call? Emergency phone numbers should be posted at each telephone in your workplace, along with your worksite's address

and directions to your work area.

4. The alarm systems.

You should also be familiar with the various alarm sounds and lights in your workplace. Alarm systems typically have different signals for fire and intruder emergencies. There may also be specific alarms related to hazardous equipment, chemicals, gases and other hazards.

Final Word

Do your best to plan for the worst. That's the basis of emergency preparedness.

Quiz

1. If a workplace emergency occurs, everyone will know automatically what to do even if they have not received training.
 True
 False
2. A good emergency preparedness plan includes all natural and man-made disasters that could occur.
 True
 False
3. Explain how to activate the internal alarm system in your work area. _____
4. Are you required to shut down any equipment if you leave your work station in an emergency?
 Yes
 No
5. Where should you and your co-workers gather after you have left the building in an emergency? _____

What Would You Do?

You spot a fire in the waste basket outside your work area and rush to get the fire extinguisher. By the time you get to the fire, it's spread beyond the basket and is moving up the wall. What would you do?

Fire Is A Killer

What's At Stake

The only way to stay away from the perils of fire is preparation, preparation and preparation!!!

What's the Danger?

Fire kills more people each year than all-natural disasters combined. When a fire occurs, there's little time to think.

A fire need three things to start to spread: oxygen, heat and fuel.

- Oxygen makes up 21 percent of the air we breathe. That percentage goes higher if an oxygen canister or hose leaks. This situation makes a fire start more easily, burn hotter, and become much fiercer than a normal fire. These types of fires are more difficult to put out.
- Heat can come from variety of sources. Smoking, cooking, or a sparking wire can all contribute to the start of a fire.
- Fuel is anything that will burn. You'd be surprised at how much of your workplace is flammable—carpeting, drapes, paper, oil rags, wood, and the list goes on.

Remove one of those three key factors and a fire can't start.

How to Protect Yourself

A Fire Prevention Program helps reduce the likelihood of a fire starting. It should include:

- Emergency plans.
- Escape routes and exits.
- Fire prevention policies.

Emergency plans tell you how to evacuate in case of a fire and how to account for all those evacuated. Fire drills based on the emergency plan will help you understand what to do during an emergency.

Escape routes and exits should be clearly marked and never locked or blocked. You don't want to guess at or search around for an exit during an emergency. Also, the building should have at least two emergency exits.

Fire prevention policies organize all the information about fire safety into one place. Everyone should review the fire prevention policy each time it changes. The policy should contain information on:

- How to store combustible materials.
- Location of fire extinguishers.
- Disposal methods for flammable materials or chemicals.

No matter how many preventative measures are in place, fire still happen. If a fire does start, here are a few steps you can take to stay safe: How to store combustible materials.

- **Alert anyone in the area.** Call the local emergency number, the

fire department, or your company's fire brigade.

- **Evacuate the area.** Follow the fire escape route indicated in the emergency plan and fire safety drills.
- **Meet your co-workers in the designated outside area.** You don't want anyone going back into a burning building for you if you've already escaped to safety. You should only use a fire extinguisher if you've been trained to use it, the fire is small enough, and it's safe to do so.

Final Word

Stop fires before they happen. Ensure you have been trained on emergency plans, escape routes, and fire prevention policies to ensure your safety. Fire prevention is all about helping businesses avoid injuries, damages, and potentially, safety fines. Follow the tips suggested in this Safety Talk to prevent fires in your workplace.

Quiz

1. Fire kills more people each year than all-natural disasters combined.
 - True
 - False
2. A Fire Prevention Program helps reduce the likelihood of a fire starting.
 - True
 - False
3. A fire needs the following to start or spread:
 - a. Oxygen, flammable liquids, spark.
 - b. Heat, fuel, nitrogen.
 - c. Oxygen canister, fuel, heat.
4. A Fire Prevention Program should include which of the following (there is more than one answer).
 - a. An emergency plan.
 - b. Escape routes.
 - c. A fire extinguisher.
 - d. Local fire department contacts information.

What Would You Do?

You noticed that a co-worker wheels a pallet jack in front of an emergency exit and leaves it there while he goes on break. What would you do?

Enhancing Office Security

Many of us live with a false sense of security. We think crime happens to other people and terrorism happens in other countries. Unfortunately, that's not true. Murders occur every 21 minutes and assaults every 16 seconds. This is especially true of the workplace. Office buildings in particular are common sites for criminal attacks of all kinds—by disgruntled workers, by perpetrators and victims of domestic violence and even by mentally impaired transients looking for a place to shack up.

"Security is an illusion. Life is either a daring adventure, or it is nothing at all." –Helen Keller.

The reality is that we must consider all manner of threat to our personal safety, including in the workplace. Let's talk about ways to train office workers to pay attention to security.

Disarm Threats with Proactive Planning

An attacker's greatest weapon is the element of surprise. To act reactively is to be at the attacker's mercy. Eliminating surprise requires proactive behavior. As safety managers, you must take responsibility for workplace security. Premise security is typically the job of the in-house security officer; but they can't be everywhere at once. Here are some guidelines to help you eliminate common risks and enhance the security of your office or other workplace:

- **Place barriers to access.**

Limit access to your facility to employees and authorized visitors. To keep everyone else out, enforce parking bans. Attackers often drive their vehicle right into the building where they commit their attacks. To reduce this risk, erect concrete highway dividers along your facility's perimeter. You can even use aesthetically pleasing barriers, such as flowerpots, concrete benches or sculptures.

- **Remove trash containers.**

Remove trash barrels and waste bins in common areas near entrance ways, both inside and outside, where trespassers might have access. Offices located near residential neighborhoods might find their trash bins overloaded with homeowner refuse that could be hazardous or even explosive.

- **Secure ground floor vents.**

Street-level fresh air intake vents are designed to draw air for heating and cooling systems. But these vents pose bio-terrorism risks. Protect your air supply from sabotage by fencing off moving vents or by moving them to higher levels. Ensure that inside and outside air passes through HEPA filters that remove all particles larger than 1 micron. You should also upgrade your smoke detection system to take advantage of new technology. Some smoke detectors can now sense carbon monoxide and even teargas, pepper spray and some nerve gas and chemical weapons.

- **Reduce entry points.**

A single point of entry, whenever feasible, is best. It helps security personnel control who enters the building. You should also consider

hiring guards trained to identify potential threats, rather than someone who just checks IDs. Pieces of paper with words and photos laminated in plastic are easy to counterfeit.

- **Install security cameras.**

A security camera is your eye in the sky. You also need qualified people to "monitor the monitor." But remember that a single security guard watching 50 video screens won't cut it. At big facilities, the guard should be supported by trained and motivated plainclothes guards, inside and outside the facility, watching every aspect of your site at all times.

- **Monitor shipping and receiving.**

This is a weak point in most security plans through which intruders can get in. In the shipping and receiving area, security personnel must:

- Make sure no one enters the building; and
- Check and scan all items before they enter the building.

- **Monitor web use.**

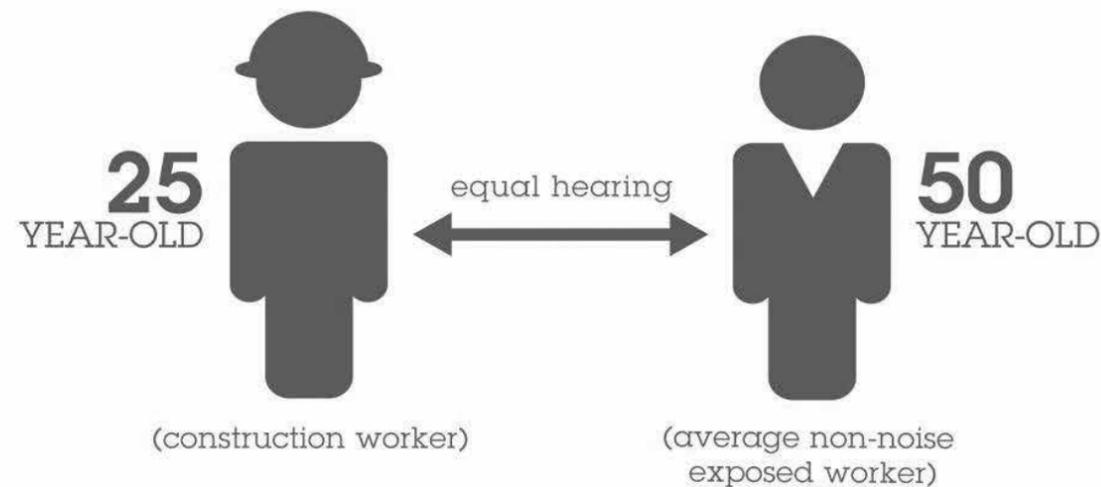
Employees access the Internet at work for both job-related and personal activities. They may also use it for illegal activities. Alarming, the number of employees transmitting sensitive, proprietary company data via the Internet is increasing. If this is a concern in your organization, there are several surveillance technologies that can help your IT department monitor online activity. Many businesses use these techniques to protect their investments.



Conclusion

No matter what technologies and security methods you use, you should also have a third party conduct a security audit of your facility. An unbiased professional can spot security loopholes and vulnerabilities unique to your site, and make recommendations to help secure the future of your workplace, your employees and your business.

It's common for construction workers to have the hearing of workers twice their age.



Is it too loud at work? Talk to your employer about quieter tools and machinery.



<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/buyquiet>

CPWR THE CENTER FOR CONSTRUCTION RESEARCH AND TRAINING

BY THE NUMBERS

Hearing and Noise Prevention

- The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) recommends that workers are not exposed to noise at a level that amounts to more than 85 decibels (dBA) over 8 continuous hours.
- It is estimated that over 30 million U.S. & Canadian workers are exposed to noise levels high enough to cause irreversible hearing loss.
- More than 20,000 workplace hearing loss cases occur annually, many resulting in permanent hearing loss.
- 24% of hearing loss in the U.S. & Canada has been attributed to workplace exposure.
- Hearing loss is the third most common chronic physical condition among adults after hypertension and arthritis.
- About 12 % of the working population has hearing difficulty.
- About 8% of the working population has Tinnitus (ringing in the ears) and 4% has both hearing difficulty and Tinnitus.

Employment and Economic Costs

- 48% of people who have hearing loss were employed in 2014, but about the same amount (47%) are not in the labor force.
- Adults with hearing loss are more likely to have lower education, lower income, and be unemployment or underemployment, compared with their typical-hearing peers.
- Individuals with hearing loss also experience greater difficulties in employment transition and career development, compared with those with typical hearing.
- Untreated hearing loss can decrease one's annual income by as much as \$30,000. The yearly cost to society is estimated to be as high as \$26 billion in unrealized federal taxes; and an estimated aggregate yearly income loss of \$176 billion due to underemployment.

FOCUS ON

Fire Extinguisher Safety

INCIDENT

Barney's heart pounded when he opened the back room and saw smoke and a small but growing flame. Hands shaking, he yanked a fire extinguisher off the wall. Someone had taped a note on it – "P.A.S.S." Barney recognized the reminder, but too many months had passed since he had that safety lesson. Unable to remember the steps for using an extinguisher, he yelled for help. By the time a co-worker heard him, the room was ablaze.

NEED TO KNOW

Using a portable fire extinguisher is an important safety skill. You never know when you might have to use it at work, home or on the road.

To extinguish small fires before they become large, extinguishers' contents smother or cool the flames. However, not everyone knows how to use an extinguisher. If a fire broke out in your work area, you need to stop it before it spreads. You wouldn't have time to ask your safety officer to teach you how to use equipment.

The route to the extinguisher must be kept clear at all times. This means you must not place boxes, equipment or other obstructions in the path.

The extinguisher must be maintained and serviced regularly. If it has been used, it must be refilled or replaced so it is ready to use again. Tell your supervisor if you see anything wrong with the extinguisher.

You need training so you will understand when and how to operate a fire extinguisher. You also need hands-on practice to be able to operate a fire extinguisher in an emergency.

Most portable fire extinguishers operate in a similar manner. Use the word PASS to help you remember the steps in working an extinguisher:

P – pull the pin

A – aim at the base of the fire

S – squeeze the handle to release the extinguishing material

S – sweep from side to side until the extinguisher is empty

The Class A extinguisher is used for fires in ordinary combustibles. Wood, paper, plastic and cloth are examples.

The Class B extinguisher is used for fires involving combustible and flammable liquids – except vegetable oils.

The Class C extinguisher is for fires in electrical equipment.

The Class D extinguisher is a specialized one used in certain workplaces. It fights fires involving combustible metals such as magnesium.

The Class K extinguisher is a response to the trend toward using vegetable oils for frying instead of animal fats. The vegetable oils cook

at a higher temperature. The Class B extinguishers used previously are not effective against these hotter fires. And remember: It's "K" for "kitchen." This is the extinguisher to use now for a cooking fire.

Classes A, B and C are often combined into one extinguisher, such as the Class ABC extinguisher you probably have in your home, or the Class BC extinguisher you carry in your motor vehicle.

BUILDING FIRE EXITS

Each workplace building must have at least two means of escape remote from each other to be used in a fire emergency.

Fire doors must not be blocked or locked to prevent emergency use when employees are within the buildings. Delayed opening of fire doors is permitted when an approved alarm system is integrated into the fire door design.

Exit routes from buildings must be clear and free of obstructions and properly marked with signs designating exits from the building.

PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Each workplace building must have a full complement of the proper type of fire extinguisher for the fire hazards present, excepting when employers wish to have employees evacuate instead of fighting small fires.

Employees expected or anticipated to use fire extinguishers must be instructed on the hazards of fighting fire, how to properly operate the fire extinguishers available, and what procedures to follow in alerting others to the fire emergency.

Only approved fire extinguishers are permitted to be used in workplaces, and they must be kept in good operating condition. Proper maintenance and inspection of this equipment is required of each employer.

Where the employer wishes to evacuate employees instead of having them fight small fires there must be written emergency plans and employee training for proper evacuation.

SUMMARY

Fire extinguishers have proven their effectiveness in extinguishing fires, saving lives, and protecting property from fire.

Always remember to:

- Ensure the fire extinguishers are present where they're supposed to be,
- Ensure the fire extinguishers are in good condition and ready for use and
- Ensure the fire extinguishers do not need any service, maintenance or annual certification.

Patient Lifting Injuries

Tove Schuster raced to help a fellow nurse lift a patient at Crozer-Chester Medical Center near Philadelphia in March 2010. While working the overnight shift, she heard an all-too-common cry: "Please, I need help. My patient has fallen on the floor."

The patient was a woman who weighed more than 300 pounds. So, Schuster did what nursing schools and hospitals across the country teach: She gathered a few colleagues, and they lifted the patient as a team.

"I had her legs — a corner of one of the legs, anyway," says Schuster, who was 43 years old at the time. "And as we swung her up onto the bed, I felt something pop. And I went 'ooo.'"

She finished the shift in pain and drove straight home to bed. But after Schuster woke up late that afternoon, her husband, Matt, heard her shouting. He says he ran to the bedroom and found her crawling across the floor. "I thought it was a joke at first," he says. "And she says, 'I can't walk.'"

NEED TO KNOW

Patient handling is the top cause of injury among care workers. Care workers who move people are at significant risk of sprains and strain injuries. Physically dependent people need to be assessed, taking into account the task being performed and the space in which the work will take place. Controlling the risk involves providing appropriate mechanical equipment, and training workers on safe work procedures and use of equipment.

It's no secret that healthcare workers are in danger of injuries sustained from improperly lifting and moving the patients they tend to every day in hospitals. And if workers can't safely move patients, it places the patients at risk as well.

Despite this, hospitals still are not employing enough assistive devices to help move patients, and that's a major reason why healthcare workers have one of the highest rates of occupational musculoskeletal injuries. A recent study found that such devices can help cut down on these injuries and improve patient care at the same time.

STATISTICS

- One major source of injury to healthcare workers is musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). In 2017, nursing assistants had the second highest number of cases of MSDs. There were 18,090 days away from work cases, which equates to an incidence rate (IR) of 166.3 per 10,000 workers, more than five times the average for all industries. This compares to the all-worker days-away from work rate of 30.5 per 10,000 workers.
- The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health reports that there are 75 lifting-related injuries for every 10,000 full-time hospital workers, and 107 injuries for every 10,000 workers at nursing homes and residential facilities. Hospital rates are nearly

twice the national average for all industries, and nursing home rates are nearly three times as high.

- According to surveys, there are more than 35,000 back and other injuries among nursing employees every year, severe enough that they have to miss work.

PREVENTION

An ounce of prevention yields more than a pound of cure.

- Transfer, Reposition and Lifting Services
- Industries where patient handling tasks are performed include:
 - Long-Term Care (includes facilities that provide skilled or non-skilled nursing care);
 - Acute Care – (includes hospitals, out-patient surgical centers, and clinics);
 - Home Healthcare workers; and
 - Others – such as physical therapists, radiologists, sonographers, etc.

Some examples of areas of a facility that may be identified as high-risk include: bathing rooms, extended care wings, and diagnostic units (e.g., radiology, emergency department, spinal unit, orthopedics department).

It is clear the healthcare industry must rely on technology to make patient handling and movement safe. Patient transfer and lifting devices are key components of an effective program to control the risk of injury to patients and staff associated with lifting, transferring, repositioning or movement of patients.

Essential elements of such a program include management commitment to implement a safe patient handling program and to provide workers with appropriate measures to avoid manual handling; worker participation in the assessment and implementation processes and the evaluation and selection of patient handling devices; a thorough hazard assessment that addresses high risk units or areas; investment in equipment; care planning for patient handling and movement; training for staff; and program review and evaluation processes. The education and training of healthcare employees should be geared towards assessment of hazards in the healthcare work setting, selection and use of the appropriate patient lifting equipment and devices, and review of research-based practices of safe patient handling.

The use of assistive patient handling equipment and devices is beneficial not only for healthcare staff, but also for patients. Explaining planned lifting procedures to patients prior to lifting and enlisting their cooperation and engagement can increase patient safety and comfort, and enhance their sense of dignity.